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REVIEWED BY FSchmelzer DATE 7/2/85
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DENIAL ☐ PUB LAW - ☑
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Dear Mr. Long:

I have been asked to follow up Mr. Friedersdorf's reply to your letter of July 1 regarding the proposed sale of AWACS aircraft to Saudi Arabia.

As the President recently confirmed in letters to the Congressional leadership, the Administration plans to submit to the Congress for review in the near future a package of equipment and associated spares, support and training for Saudi Arabia to improve its air defense capabilities.

Our proposal to sell Saudi Arabia this equipment emphasizes this Administration's determination to counter the erosion in Middle East/Persian Gulf security, bolster our friends, protect vital Western interests, and block Soviet exploitation of regional tensions and vulnerabilities. We believe it is important to build the confidence of our friends by helping them with reasonable and adequate means of defense.

We are aware of the assurances the previous Administration gave the Congress in 1978 regarding the supplementary F-15 equipment now proposed for sale. The critical fact today is that circumstances in the region have changed dramatically. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the turmoil of the Iranian revolution, the Iraq-Iran war, and the Soviet presence in South Yemen and Ethiopia underscore the region's instability and the dangers of Soviet penetration and exploitation.

We see no reason why the sale of this equipment to improve Saudi air defenses should lead to an arms race, or a race for U.S. security assistance, in the region. While we recognize that the sale would complicate Israeli defense planning, the equipment package would not measurably affect Israel's qualitative military edge over its Arab neighbors' collective capabilities, nor would it provide a qualitatively new threat to Israel.

The Honorable
Clarence D. Long,
House of Representatives

The Saudis could turn to other Western sources for comparable systems if the proposed sale of equipment is not consumated. It would not be in our interest nor in the interest of Israel if the U.S. were replaced as Saudi Arabia's primary arms supplier and security partner.

The President is aware that a number of Members of Congress have serious reservations regarding the sale. He has asked, however, that no one prejudge the Administration's proposal before it is presented. We will make a strong case that the sale is in the interest of our country, the Western Alliance and stability in the Middle East. We hope that when the Administration submits it proposal in detail, you will give it your full consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Richard Fairbanks
Assistant Secretary
for Congressional Relations

Drafted:RBEhrnman
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S/S#8123842
Clearances: NEA/ARP:RHPelletreau
H:EMartin
PM:EBunn
NEA:JWTwinam
T:RAherne

ID 8104751 NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL PAGE 001

REFERRAL DATE: 10 AUG 81

MEMORANDUM FOR: STATE SECRETARIAT

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

8123842

DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION: TO: PRES

SOURCE: LONG, CLARENCE D

DATE: 01 JUL 81

KEYWORDS: SAUDI ARABIA FMS

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SUBJ: URGES CANCELLATION OF AWACS SALE TO SAUDI ARABIA

REQUIRED ACTION: DIRECT REPLY FURNISH INFO COPY

DUEDATE: 17 AUG 81

COMMENTS:

FOR ALLEN J LENZ

STAFF DIRECTOR

---------- FOR NSC USE ONLY ----------

FOR INFO NAU KEMP FEITH F WH O MB C MB

SCHWEITZER KIMMITT

Received in S/S-I
8/11 at 10:00 A.M.

July 31, 1981

8123842

Dear Mr. Long:

This is to acknowledge and thank you for your July 1 letter to the President urging cancellation of the proposed arms sale to Saudi Arabia.

Please know that the views expressed in your letter, which reached the White House on July 15, will be transmitted to the President's foreign policy advisers. As Chairman of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Relations, your interest in contacting us on this matter is most appreciated, and I can assure you that your concerns will receive careful study.

With cordial regard, I am

Sincerely,

Max L. Friedersdorf
Assistant to the President

The Honorable Clarence D. Long
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

MLF:CMP:asr

cc: w/copy of inc, NSC Secretariat - for DIRECT response (with copy to Max L. Friedersdorf.)

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CLARENCE D. LONG
2D DISTRICT, MARYLAND

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8123842

Pres. Corr.

July 1, 1981

032125

The Honorable Ronald W. Reagan
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I respectfully urge cancellation, rather than mere deferral, of the proposal to sell five AWACS and additional fuel tanks and air-to-air missiles for 62 F-15 fighters to Saudi Arabia.

The Long-Lent bipartisan Resolution of Disapproval (H. Con. Res. 118) has now been cosponsored by 232 Members of the House, including 61 Republicans, encompassing liberals and conservatives of both parties--14 more than a majority. This is the first time in history that a Resolution of Disapproval has been cosponsored by more than 200 Members. At least 75 additional Members who do not wish to oppose the plan publicly at this time assured me that they would vote against it. Similarly, in the Senate, 54 Senators--four more than a majority--have signed a letter opposing the arms package, and many others have indicated their opposition.

As Chairman of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, I am keenly aware that the additional insecurity to Israel posed by the arms package is bound to require additional military and economic aid to that country and therefore also to Egypt, thus adding to our foreign aid expenditures.

Your impressive victories in the House on your economic program (for much of which I voted) should not be jeopardized before your full program has been enacted and given the chance to show what it can do. If you succeed, as I hope, in reducing Federal spending and curbing inflation without a major recession, it will be a landmark in the history of the Presidency.

I hope you will give my suggestion to cancel the arms sale to Saudi Arabia your sympathetic consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Clarence D. Long

CLARENCE D. LONG

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